TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office

February 22, 1999 LB 356

"producers", maybe the white people in that room and in the overflow room would have understand what I always talk about when I mention the terrible things that happen to black people, and we feel hopeless and helpless. That is some of the terminelogy used by these producers. How those with the power have no concern except for the profits that they make. The independent and small producers have no place to turn for meaningful assistance. Oh, the federal government has a Livestock and Packers Act, or whatever it's called, which is supposed to prevent certain anticompetitive and other harmful practices, but the consensus among producers seems to be that that act is not enforced. It is on the books, but it does not protect anybody's rights. Those who administer the laws kowtow to the big and the powerful. I think it may have been Senator Schrock, who had indicated that when time comes to try to sell your cattle you have such a narrow window of opportunity for making that sale that you are almost compelled to take it or leave it in terms of the bid that is made on your cattle. People, according to Senator Schrock, will become so frustrated that they might become a part of the problem and enter these But they feel so without contracts that further hurt them. assistance or recourse that, in desperation, they do what they can to salvage what they can and, by so doing, they play into the hands of the monster packers and hurt their own interests. When it comes to the interests and rights of black people, there is not a great amount of concern in this or any other Legislature. When I was trying to stop a highway from destroying my community, I got no support from this Legislature. Senator Dierks is about to achieve the successful withdrawal of Nebraska from that nuclear waste compact and I've supported I support the rural people. The number of letters that I got from producers and farmers after that hearing expressing appreciation for the role that I played in questioning and letting the wind out of some of these big shots representing the packers, the letters could have been heartening except that I had to keep in mind that when there are serious problems facing my people there's no committee down here, like the Agriculture Committee, which looks out for the interests of rural people, which would after the interest of my people. There is no other senator who will speak out on behalf of my people in the way that I speak out for the rural people and others than rural people. And it is practically impossible to make my colleagues